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### 1. PM releases wild Cheetahs in Kuno National Park

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**Syllabus:** GS 3, Environment

**Prelims:** Project Cheetah and Kuno National Park.

**Mains:** Environment Conservation.

**Context:** Release of wild cheetahs in Kuno National Park.

**Details:**

- Under the ambit of Project Cheetah, Prime Minister released wild Cheetahs in Kuno National Park, Madhya Pradesh.
- A total of eight wild Cheetahs were brought from Namibia. It includes five females and three males. An MoU regarding the same was signed between the two countries earlier in 2022.
- In 1952, all the species of cheetah were declared extinct from India.
- Project Cheetah is the world's first inter-continental large wild carnivore translocation project.

**Significance of Project Cheetah:**

- The release of wild Cheetahs will diversify and revitalize India's wildlife and its habitat.
- It will help in restoring grassland ecosystems and the open forests of the country.
- It will ensure the conservation of biodiversity and enhance the ecosystem services like carbon sequestration, water security, and soil moisture conservation.
- The effort is in line with wildlife conservation and environmental protection. Moreover, it also has the potential to ensure enhanced livelihood opportunities for the local residents through services like eco-tourism and eco-development.

**Achievements of India in the field of sustainability and conservation:**

- The population of Tigers in India has considerably increased from approximately 2,226 in 2014 to nearly 2,967 in 2018 under [Project Tiger](#). This achievement of the goal of doubling the Tiger's

number in 2018, much ahead of the target year 2022 is commendable.

- The budgetary allocation for the conservation of Tiger has also improved to about Rs 300 crore in 2022.
- The total number of community reserves has increased to 100 in the year 2019. The forest and tree cover has also expanded by 16,000 square km in a span of just four years.
- The Protected area has expanded and reached 5.03% of the total geographical area of the country.
- Asiatic Lions population has seen a steady rise reaching 674 individuals from nearly 523 lions in 2015. The growth rate of 28.87 is by far the highest growth rate achieved.
- The population of Leopard has also shown an immense growth of nearly sixty percent from 2014 to 2020.

